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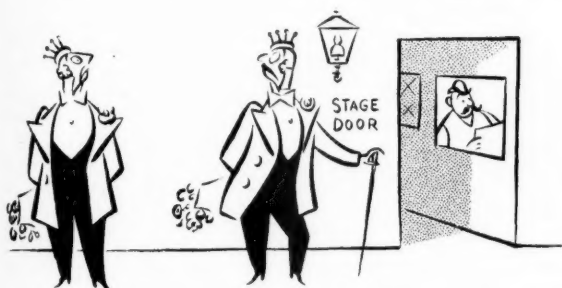
## Charivaria

A FAMOUS batsman says he often feels hungry during a long innings. But he never nibbles at fast balls on the off.

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### Bubble, Bubble

"Two thousand Territorials of the 58th Field Regiment from Sussex, and the 97th Yeomanry from Kent, who began their annual camp at Okehampton, Devon, under canvas are now under water." *Daily Paper.*



A leading lady of the 'nineties is described in a biography as "an actress without peer." But not because she wasn't asked, apparently.

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"To drop the cosmolical constant would knock the bottom out of space," states an eminent scientist. Oh, well, let it drop—and put space on a par with everything else.

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"SILVER KEEPS STEADY."

*Sunday Express.*

Less bobbing about?

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"In the so-called Dark Ages one could bathe in the sea free of charge," says an indignant reformer. Then came the farthing dip.



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"Prices of goods were subject to an almost general increase of 20 to 30 per cent. Fearing further rises, thousands of people have begun to hoard foodstuffs. To-day no individual was able to buy more than one bottle of gin or whisky from the same shop." *Daily Paper.*

Hardly enough for breakfast, by Jove!



A man was recently found to have a second appendix. His doctor, we understand, has decided to regard it as a reserve fund.

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It has been stated by a prospector that the United States could be put into Siberia and not noticed. All the same, we think Senator BORAH might possibly suspect something.

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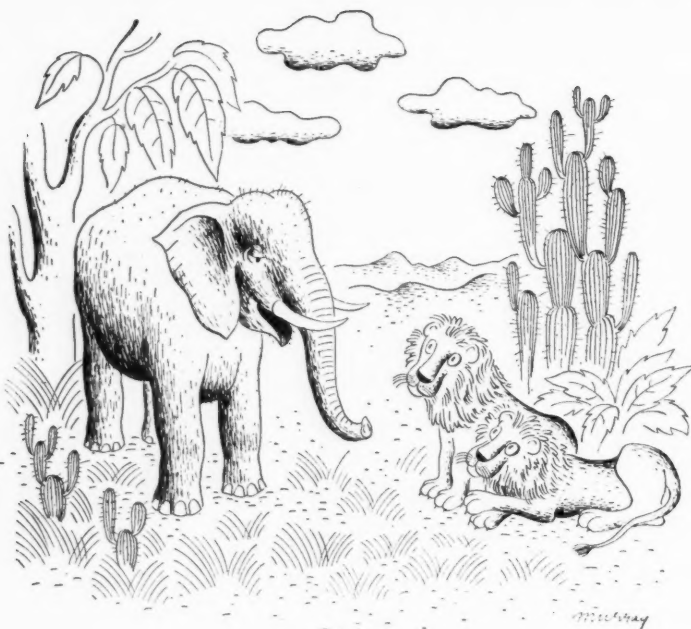
### Overcrowding

"Dear Madam,—The hotel is completely filled up until the end of the season, but we will inform you at once if someone falls out, as frequently happens."

*Letter from South Coast hotel.*

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A man who kicked a constable on the shins because the officer had touched him on the shoulder is to stand trial. He may plead sunburn.



*"It's quite easy—just a matter of the association of ideas."*

## Investigations of Hector Tumbler

Tumbler Bides His Time

IT was a summer afternoon, in those days which seem so far off now, when afternoons really were afternoons. The weather had been kind to Lord Growke's annual garden-party. Over the spacious lawns of Growke Hall, the sun shone down on unjust and unpleasant alike, transfiguring the brilliant throng which moved hither and thither upon the smooth green-sward, so that it seemed scarcely human. Seated in a rhododendron bush below the terrace, but even in that posture towering head and shoulders above the rest in his bottle-green morning-coat and cloth cap, I saw Hector Tumbler, his eyes fixed on the ground. Evidently he was drinking in the beauty of the scene.

Then, just as I was making my way towards him, stark tragedy shattered, at one blow, that scene of peace and beauty. I heard a hoarse cry. I whipped round. Lord Growke, a few paces off, had clapped his hands to his

waistcoat. Had he not remained standing he would have fallen. And I saw, with a kind of nameless dread, that every one of his waistcoat buttons had vanished! The once noble garment flapped loosely, pathetically, in the breeze.

It was natural for me to look down at my own waistcoat. I flushed crimson. The buttons were all missing! And even as I looked, I knew, from the cries of horror on all sides, that not one of the guests had escaped. For a moment we looked at each other in silence. The same thought, I knew, was in everyone's mind. Who was it that could strike so surely and so silently, and depart without leaving a trace of his presence behind?

Tumbler had already taken charge of the situation.

"Nobody must leave the garden," he said authoritatively, and as though by magic the party began to break up.

"The police mustn't be told," said

Lord Growke in an agitated voice. "I can't have any publicity. But if you can get back my buttons, Mr. Tumbler, I shall not attempt to express my gratitude."

"Leave it to me," said the great detective quietly.

DURING the journey home, Tumbler was mostly silent. As for me, I did not attempt to question him. When I first began my association with Tumbler I realised that I was inviting for myself a life of excitement, and it might be, of danger. Wherever Tumbler was, murders were committed, Cabinet Ministers were kidnapped, and important papers were stolen, for no other reason, it often seemed, than that he should solve these mysteries. I had early resolved to be surprised at nothing.

All the same, my resolution was sorely tried when we reached Tumbler's railway-carriage. Without a word he handed me a large printed visiting-card.

"GIUSEPPE BOTULISMO, B.A. (Grimsby)," I read on it. "MASTER CRIMINAL. Families Catered for. 170, Persepolis Road, Balham."

I stared at Tumbler in bewilderment.

"I picked that up at the garden-party," he remarked. "I said nothing about it at the time, of course. I didn't want to alarm everybody. But there's no doubt about it in my mind. Our old friend Botulismo has those buttons, and he means to keep them."

"What are you going to do?" I asked.

"I shall wait here," said Tumbler slowly, "for Botulismo to bring them back."

For a moment I wondered if he knew what he was saying.

"But surely," I said, "Botulismo won't come here. This is the last place he would visit, I should have thought. He must know you live here."

TUMBLER laughed. "Botulismo," he said, "is no ordinary criminal. That's why the police are powerless to deal with him. That's where I come in. Botulismo and I understand one another. And hang it," he added in one of his rare bursts of profanity, "Master Criminal though he be, I have a certain respect for him. He's given me many a good chase. But I always get him in the end."

I must have looked a little dubious, for in a moment Tumbler was his old aloof self again. And for several days after that he was inaccessible. Once, on looking through the window of his compartment, I saw him thoughtfully slashing the carriage seat with an old

razor-blade. The Master was at work. Yet I will admit I was worried. The first unworthy doubt of Tumbler had insinuated itself into my brain. I could not really believe that Botulismo would fall into his trap, if trap it could be called. Fool that I was! There were still so many things I did not understand.

LATE one night, about a week after the garden-party, we sat together in one of the first-class compartments. The great detective's eyes were closed, and he was breathing heavily. He appeared, in fact, to be thinking hard. Suddenly I heard voices outside the window. One of the carriage-doors slammed. Tumbler sprang up.

"Follow me," he said in a low tone which made the windows rattle. "And be prepared for anything. This may be dangerous."

He slipped a revolver inside his coat-collar, and it immediately fell from his left trouser-leg. I felt safer now. Tumbler was a deadly shot with a revolver. I have known him, not once, but many times, shatter an alarm-clock at three yards' distance, and once, at Brighton, he broke a plate-glass window from the other side of the street.

Cautiously I followed him along the corridor, then stopped in amazement. In one of the third-class compartments four men wearing bowler-hats and black overcoats, attaché cases beside them, were sitting with a mackintosh spread out over their knees, engaged in a game of solo. All four were of villainous aspect, one particularly so. And the counters which they were using for their game were—the missing waistcoat buttons!

"You see, a disguise," whispered Tumbler. "Didn't I tell you I knew Botulismo?"

But I could only watch the subsequent happenings in a dream. Tumbler stepped forward with all that suavity which was famous from Novaya Zemlya to Pernambuco.

"Good evening, gentlemen," he said inaudibly. "May I make a fifth?"

Botulismo swung round with a snarl of mingled anger, rage, and fury. Then he smiled wryly.

"All right, I give in," he said. He held out his hands. Tumbler fumbled in his pockets and produced four pairs of handcuffs. Then things began to happen quickly. Before Tumbler could make a move, Botulismo's hand was on the communication cord. He pulled it. Involuntarily we started back in horror. In a split second the four criminals were through the carriage-door, and we heard their

running footsteps grow faint in the distance.

"Foiled again," said the great detective in a surprisingly cheerful tone of voice.

I nodded doubtfully. "But," I said in a puzzled way, "there's one thing I'd like to know. I don't see what Botulismo expects to get out of these extraordinary crimes. What is his object?"

"He has no object," said Tumbler. "He gets nothing out of it whatever. That's precisely the diabolical cleverness of the man. Didn't I tell you he was no ordinary criminal?"

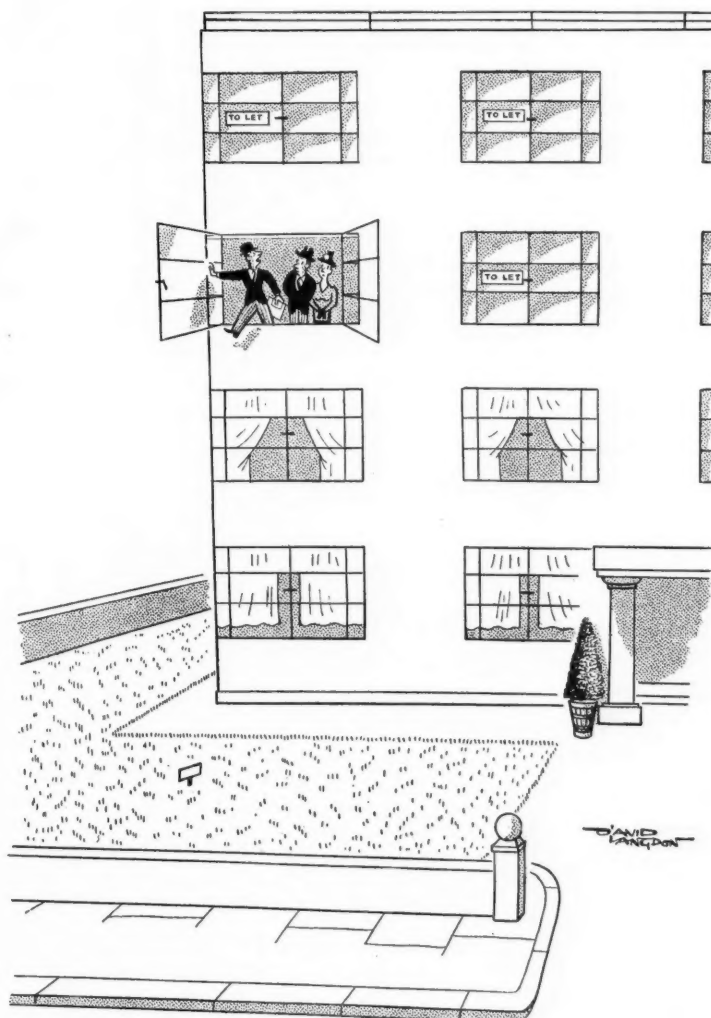
## Encouragement

IT must be good to see the soil  
Goaded by unremitting toil,  
By harrowing and heat,  
By soothing rains in season sprayed,  
A splash of sun, a dash of shade,  
A smattering of sleet,  
By divers dressings richly blent  
And the great British Government,  
Turn into sugar beet.

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"FUNK TO VISIT HOLLAND"  
Daily Telegraph.

To look for Dutch courage?



"Usual French windows leading right bang out on to the lawn."

## A Private's Nosegay

**Y**ESTERDAY I was on my first parade.  
I wonder if any of you who read this article remember that famous line of Alfred Lord Tennyson:

"A sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things."

The night before when I had been drinking in the rough canteen or listening to the rude pleasantries of my companions, or lying on my hard bed, I had not been able to help seeing myself as I had stood a few evenings earlier, my hand on the marble balustrade of a wide terrace overlooking a spacious garden in the gloom. The house belonged to a lady so noble and so gracious that I shall not mention her name, lest you should think that I try to add a special glamour to my writings by suggesting that I habitually move amongst the wealthy and the great. But the whole air was fragrant with the scent of eschscholtzias and a lovely girl had come very near to me, glimmering like a ghost in the subfusc light and murmured with half-closed eyes, "Give me an eschscholtzia for remembrance, Alaric, before you go," and I had plucked a single bloom and given it to her. "Spell it for me once again, Alaric," she said, and I did so. Then she pressed it to her lips. "Don't think I shall ever forget you," she had whispered, as she glode away, still glimmering as she glode. A solitary petal fell fluttering to the marble floor, and I picked it up and placed it carefully inside my pleated shirt-front, next to my heart.

And now . . .

As I stumbled blinking out of my tent I realised that I was in a new world, strong, rough and bracing. I perceived the glory of this beautiful morning earth, this England, this other Eden, this demi-paradise, and dashed away the tears from my eyes. For yes, even in this world there were flowers. Only a little way in front of me stood a golden dandelion. Have you, any of you, my readers shared the joy that I feel when I look into the full face of a yellow dandelion, that miniature sun cast down from heaven, so common that we are too often tempted to despise it, yet none the less beautiful because the prodigal hand of nature has cast a myriad of such tiny flames upon the fair green face of our native land? If you have will you please send me a post-card, not addressed to the camp but to the office of this newspaper. The Circulation Editor will acknowledge it even though I am far away.

"Sheoun!" . . .

I was awakened from my reverie by the loud voice of the sergeant. I was a little late in complying with his order and he spoke roughly to me. I felt no anger at his words and I told him so. It was his duty to see that I obeyed him. I remarked that it was such men as he, strong in action and peremptory in speech, who had helped to make England what she is to-day.

He replied with a trace of acerbity that it was — like me who made him thank God that we had a navy, and I forbore to argue the point, but later when we had gone through various complicated and undignified manoeuvres, and been dismissed, he asked me about my occupation in civil life. Repressing a slight smile with difficulty (for my face is fairly well known to the public) I said that I was a writer of newspaper articles: "or perhaps," I added, "not so much a writer of newspaper articles as a composer of prose poems."

"All right, Mr. — Prose Pome," he answered with undiminished rudeness. "We'll see if we can't find you a sanitary fatigue."

Still anxious not to annoy him I picked the yellow dandelion that had first attracted my attention, and held it out to him with a whimsical expression, but he brushed it contemptuously aside.

All day long as I went about my uncongenial duties, I strove to make excuses for him, and when others tried to blame him I sought to reprove them.

"What I think about Sergeant," said a man in my section, "is he's a —"

"He may have a nose like a peony," I said, "and a face like the back of a motor-bus, but I should not speak of him like that."

Another man stated what he would like to do to our sergeant if they were both in civilian life, and I remonstrated with him also.

"Remember," I said, "that, incredible as it may appear, he also had a mother."

And as I spoke I seemed to see our sergeant returning home to the little wicket-gate that opens on to the garden-path and leads to the rose-embowered portico under which a homely form in black with a wise and kindly face crowned with silver hair is waiting to greet him. "My boy," she says proudly, embracing him and kissing the uncouth cheek, the horrid bristling moustache. And dancing at his feet, leaping to lick his rough raw hand, wild with ecstasy at his master's return, I seemed to see our sergeant's dog . . .

Will those of you who have ever known a sergeant's dog, write to me sometimes (enclosing postage stamp) while I am still under canvas, and tell me if he treated it kindly and what was its name?

This was my reverie, and then the fancy faded and I was back on the marble terrace again in the scented gloom . . . and even more suddenly that dream was shattered also . . . the bugle blew. It was: "Come to the Cook House door, boys—"

I found I could eat a horse.

EVOE.

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## Old Pastures

(The Government is paying £2 an acre for waste land ploughed in this summer.)

**O**LD Charlie's ploughing Willow Field!  
He's taken Kate and old Brown Joe;  
It's more than twenty years ago  
Since anyone ploughed Willow Field.

The coulter cuts the dragging weeds,  
The ploughshare turns the sour turf in—  
Red flowering sorrel, parched and thin,  
And hawksbeard, blowing hairy seeds.

Bare patches, lumpy from the moles,  
And stretches rank with burrs and docks,  
With dandelions and goldilocks,  
And bramble-tangled rabbit-holes.

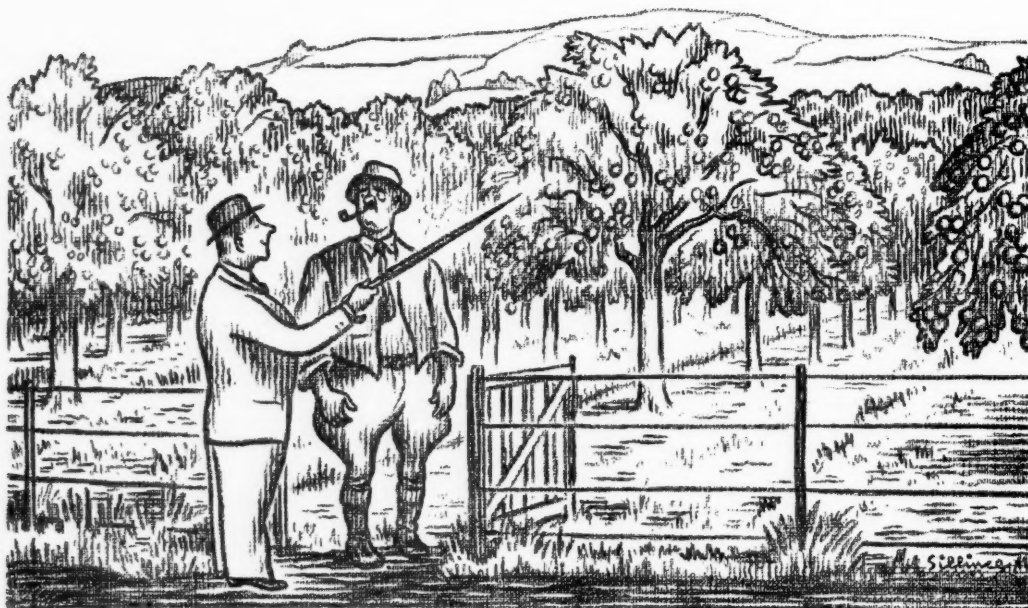
Through drifts of straggling fever-few  
All day the nodding horses plod  
And leave behind the bare brown sod  
Fresh turned for cleaning—hopeful, new.

Old Charlie's ploughing Willow Field!—  
He's taken Kate and old Brown Joe—  
That once again the corn may grow  
And turn to gold in Willow Field.





THE ADVANCE TO MOSCOW



"Growing apples again this year, I see."

## River Reflections; or, Off the Embankment

**F**OUR short blasts—followed by one! "I am about to make a half-circle, turning to star-board." Golly! is some great ship going to tie up to that buoy? We must leap from our bunk and see. We may be in danger—or merely in the way.

What is the time? 4.30 A.M. Too early.

No. All is well. It is the good old tug *Reserve* dropping a lighter or two at the barge roads on the Surrey side. She must have made six short blasts, not five—and in our somnolent state we missed one.

What is the time? It is still too early. No matter. It is a fine morning—the only part of the day that is fine nowadays. It is light, too; and since we are up we will put out our riding light and save some paraffin.

4.30. Golly! And at 7.15 we are due to broadcast to the Empire, we are not quite sure why. About the River

Thames. We wish we could tell Australia all we think about that.

We anchored last night just above Hungerford (Charing Cross) Bridge, not just below it, as is our custom. For last time we lay there, in our favourite corner, between Cleopatra's Needle and the *Seven Seas*, the last pair of a swinging tow of lighters caught us a nasty rap on the stem and might well have sunk us. All that mess of timber and stuff at Waterloo Bridge is making the set of the tide stronger, no doubt, and the bend more difficult. Extraordinary how many of London's bridges were built at the bends and corners—just to annoy the mariner.

But then, the mariner is the last person to be thought of when the authorities do things to the Thames. Look at the Embankments. From here, through Hungerford Bridge, we can see a stretch of the much-abused South Bank, that huddle of wharves

and warehouses which is held to be an eyesore and a disgrace and is to be replaced by "a fine new Embankment," like the one behind us.

Well, we shall not say a word against that, though that South Shore is not a mere "eyesore" to the mariner. Those wharves and warehouses, or most of them, are doing useful work, properly pertaining to the Port; and any mariner in trouble would get a much better reception at the South Shore than on the bare, inhospitable Embankment behind us.

Still, we admit, the South Shore has not the dignified and formal aspect that the heart of London deserves and demands. So let it go.

But let some *small* thought be given to the mariner when the nice new Embankment is built. There are Embankments and Embankments; and only yesterday, at Chelsea Pier, "Old Tom," the waterman, was speak-

ing of some of the differences. All down the Victoria Embankment, for example, there are projections from the main wall—the Air Force Memorial steps, the Cleopatra's Needle stairs, the abutments (?) for the (non-existing) pontoons at Charing Cross and the Temple, etc. These break the force of the tide, and produce "eddies" or ribbons of slack water between them. These eddies are a boon to small craft, to watermen in rowing boats, for example, since, when the tide is running east, they can make their way westward easily under the wall, and vice versa.

In Chelsea Reach the Embankment has no such projections. The long wall is flat and naked from bridge to bridge. Thus, when Old Tom is on duty at Chelsea Bridge, as he was recently for eighteen months, he has to pull his boat back in the evening to Cadogan Pier over half-a-mile and more of fierce unmitigated tide (if the tide is ebbing). A small point, no doubt, to the folk who rush along Embankments in motor-cars or to the engineers who build them—but to the waterman a big one.

Another small point. Is the new Embankment to be perpendicular or sloping? On the South side of Chelsea Reach the wall is on a slant—"splayed" was the technical term that Old Tom used—so that the wash of the tug runs up the slope and is dispersed and modified; but where the wall is perpendicular the waves are slapped back at once and cause a confused and turbulent sea. We hope that the plans of the new Embankment will be submitted to Old Tom and the Watermen and Lightermen's Union.

And before we build another grand embankment over there, what about putting the old one (behind us) in order? Yes, fellers. You stand on the dear old Victoria Embankment and are proud of it. But if you studied it from the water you would be ashamed. It is a fraud. It is one of the worst demonstrations of civic inefficiency in London. Just above Hungerford Bridge there is an elaborate embrasure designed by the engineer and author for a "pier"—or rather, pontoon or landing-stage. There is no landing-stage. Just below the Bridge there is another embrasure, and here was the old Charing Cross Pier (L.C.C.). Here lies now the excellent craft of the admirable Seven Seas Club. But there is no landing-stage. Just above Waterloo Bridge, and again at the Temple, there is similar provision for landing-stages. But there are no landing-stages. Are no landing-stages wanted in this important central

reach, the King's Reach? Certainly. In summer-time the pleasure-steamers are far too numerous (and this delights us) for the one pier available (Westminster); and they are so numerous that no private craft can lie there for more than a few minutes. In war-time the need for landing-places will be even more severe, may indeed be urgent, as recent "exercises" have shown.

Now let us have a look at the stairs and steps—those grand stairs by the Air Force Memorial and Cleopatra's Needle and the Temple. Presumably they were intended to provide a means of communication between the water and the shore. Such grandiose descents were not designed or built merely for the perilous games of small boys, or the morning ablutions of down-and-outs. The architect, one supposes, imagined the citizens walking down his beautiful steps and entering their boats, or landing from their boats and leaving them there. *Unfortunately at none of these steps has any provision been made for tying up a boat.* Nothing very elaborate is required for the purpose—only an iron ring or two in a wall or on a step. But there are no iron rings. And you cannot make fast a boat to a naked stone wall or step. At Cleopatra's Needle steps, there is, it is true, a kind of iron hand-rail, but this was intended for pedestrians (presumably suicides), not for boats, and should not, strictly, be used by the mariner.

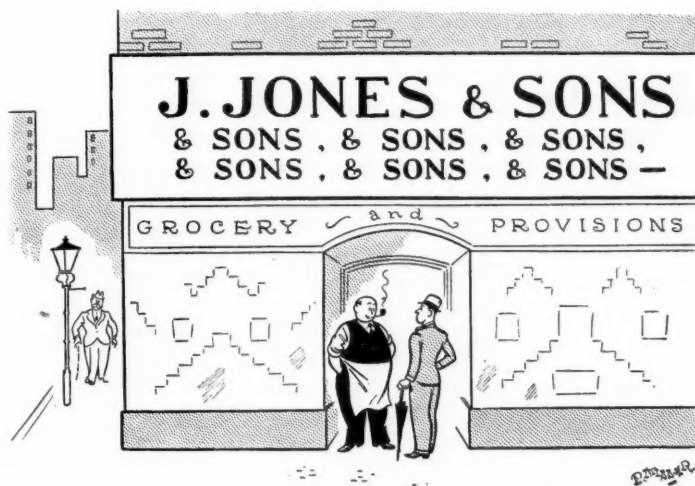
Then, all along the face of the Embankment, at short intervals, are carved lions' heads, of which we can see many now. There are sixty-six

lions (yes, we have counted them): and in the mouth of each lion is a great gun-metal ring, intended by the architect, no doubt, to be of service to the mariner—for, if not, what was the point of the rings: one might as well put sixty-six large bones or Christians in the lions' mouths. Except at the top of the tide, they are out of reach. But if there were chains hanging from them (as there should be) they might often be useful to the mariner—or the drowning man. But all this speculation is idle; for all along the Embankment are L.C.C. notices strongly forbidding the mariner to make use of these rings. And we suppose the drowning man who clung to one of them would be out of order too.

The grand Victoria Embankment, then, considered from the water, is one long lie. In all its dignified length there is not a single ring, hook, chain, bollard, or other object to which the mariner may lawfully attach his craft—except the hand-rail at Cleopatra's Needle steps, and that was not intended for the purpose. And unless he is a member of the *Seven Seas*, or a friend of H.M.S. *President*, or the good ship *Discovery*, there is no point at which he can leave a boat for half-an-hour in safety—except at Westminster Pier in the winter-time.

In short, before we throw up our hats about the new Embankment over there we should like to hear about a few details of the character mentioned above.

Now it is 6.30. We will go ashore and broadcast to Australia about the beauty and history of London River. And *A bas le L.C.C.!* A. P. H.



"Ours is a very old family concern."



## Grandfather Monroe Looks Back

A Fishing Holiday

"I DO not know," said my Grandfather Monroe, "how the great Izaak Walton came to take up angling, but in my case it followed as a direct consequence upon being kicked in the face by Sir Rundle Harmony. Do I weary you?"

"No, no!" I replied heartily.

"The incident occurred in a Rugby football-match and although I made light of my broken nose and badly lacerated ear, I felt that a little rest and relaxation would do me no harm. My father advised a week's fishing, and gave me a letter to one of his friends, Lord Tubal, who had a good stretch on the River Boddy.

"I first met Tubal," said my father, "in India. He had been sent, I believe, to carry out some espionage work on the North-West Frontier, but by some incredible piece of bungling he made his way, disguised as a Pathan, to the British Residency in Peshawar. I came upon him looking through the Resident's papers and immediately put a bullet through his turban. The affair was hushed up and he was sent back to England, none the worse except for a slight scalp wound. I am sure he will give you a hearty welcome."

"I was quite ignorant as to the proper equipment for angling, but after a little thought I decided to take fifty fathoms of strong line wound on a wooden square, some hooks, a barrel in which to pack my fish and a supply of salt to preserve them.

"Lord Tubal received me kindly, but I was rather disconcerted when he asked me if my father was still 'fond of a bottle of wine.' 'I remember an occasion in Peshawar,' he said, 'after a regimental dinner, when your father, as the result of some madcap wager, cornered the Resident's wife and shot off her hat with an elephant-gun. The Resident reprimanded your father, of course, but he had a keen appreciation of the whimsical and probably enjoyed many a quiet chuckle over the incident.'

"I tactfully said nothing of my father's version of the tale, and immediately turned the conversation to angling. Lord Tubal's eyes gleamed with enthusiasm.

"I am a disciple of the great Izaak Walton," he said. "For thirty years I have followed the master. My methods may now be a little bolder than his, but in spirit, in our love for the quiet river and the peaceful countryside, we are at one."

"What are your methods?" I asked.

"Upstream dynamiting," he replied.

"No doubt you obtain good sport in this way," I remarked cautiously.

"Immeasurably better than in any other," he said earnestly. "The day of rod and line will soon be over. The fly-fisherman, with his intricate apparatus, will be seen no more by the river, and in his place will stand the dynamiter, his hat-band full of detonators."

"Lord Tubal went on to explain that little was to be accomplished by bombing the water indiscriminately. A feeding fish must be found, and dynamited from a distance of at least twenty yards. 'Let others dice and dance,' he said quietly. 'Give me a pipe, a dog, a few sticks of dynamite and a tranquil summer evening, and leave me to blast the Vicarage Pool from end to end!'

"At dinner Lord Tubal insisted on toasting many of the more notable fish he had killed, and before we parted for the night he became extremely animated and described an

occasion on which he had despatched, at one cast, a large salmon, a sea-trout, a thirty-pound dog-otter and a water-hen. Moreover, on mounting the river bank he had found two half-pound trout in his left wader."

Here my grandfather paused and, adjusting a large pair of horn-rimmed spectacles with tremulous hands, bent forward and fixed me with a piercing stare.

"I weary you!" he exclaimed at last.

"By no means, Grandfather!" I protested.

"Perhaps I should tell you of the fishing exploits of Lord Tubal and Colonel Loomis?" he suggested.

"You have been talking for some time of Lord Tubal," I replied with a quiet smile. "Colonel Loomis will no doubt appear in due course."

"He was sitting in a willow-tree," said my Grandfather, removing his spectacles and settling himself back in his chair. "My first stick of dynamite had been thrown too strongly, and I watched it light on the other side of the river, where it exploded with a flash and a dull boom. As the echoes died away I was startled to hear a voice from the opposite bank, and I soon perceived, with surprise, that its owner was a tall, soldierly-looking man who was perched rather precariously in a willow-tree, a shot-gun in his hand.

"I had just drawn a bead on a fine hen salmon," he cried querulously, "and now that the smoke from your missile has dispersed, she has flitted away!"

"In some confusion I stammered out an apology and said that my name was Monroe, and that I was Lord Tubal's guest.

"Surely not the son of Madcap Monroe of Peshawar?" he exclaimed, raising his voice above the roar of the river.

"At a venture, I shouted back, 'Yes!'

"He seemed greatly excited, but his answer was lost to me, except for disjointed phrases such as 'espionage work,' 'masquerading as a sacred cow,' and 'claimed that the Resident was a Thug in disguise,' of which I could make little. Soon, however, his tone changed and he seemed to be denouncing Lord Tubal. I thought I heard 'rascally dynamiter,' and 'put a barrelful of salmon slugs under his left fin.' Taken aback by this uncomplimentary reference to my host, I whipped out my handkerchief, waved it cheerily, and beat a hasty retreat.

"For the rest of that week," continued my Grandfather, looking at me a little vacantly, "it was 'Boom, boom! Crack, crack! Boom, boom! Crack, crack! Boom, boom! Crack, crack!'"

"Yes, yes, Grandfather!" I interrupted, a trifle brusquely, "but which method did you decide to adopt?"

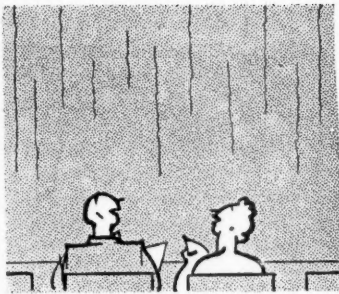
"I adopted neither," he replied, with a knowing chuckle. "I always had a strong engineering bent, and what I did was to throw a couple of dams across a quiet part of the river, make a small aperture in the lower one, and wade in the shallowing water with a stout club. That is what I did, my boy, and that, I am convinced, is what the great Izaak Walton would have done, had he thought of it."

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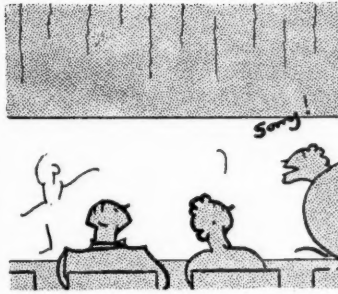
"Henderson bowled the first over, from the pavilion end, his four short legs furnishing an example of encirclement even in sport which the Dictators ought not to miss."—*Sunday Paper*.

Nobody ought to miss it.





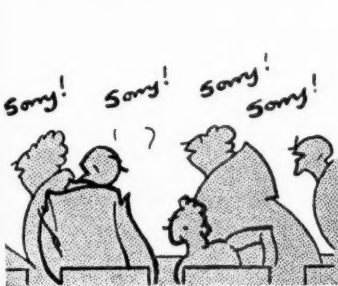
"Yes, I like arriving before the performance begins—



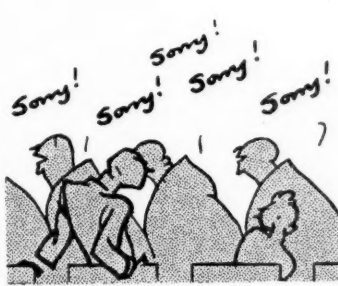
so that—



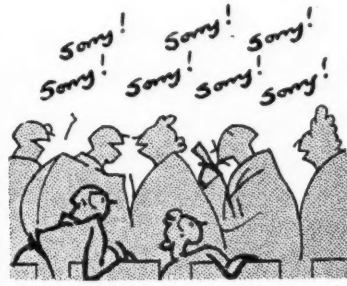
I can—



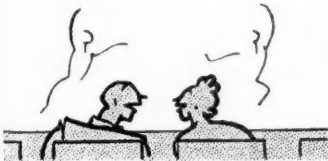
watch—



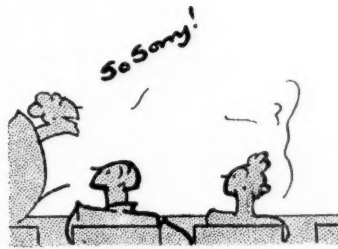
everyone else—



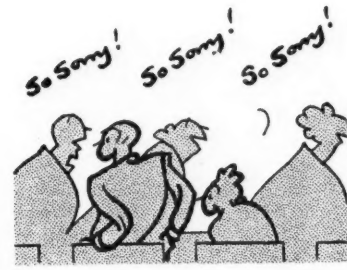
come in.



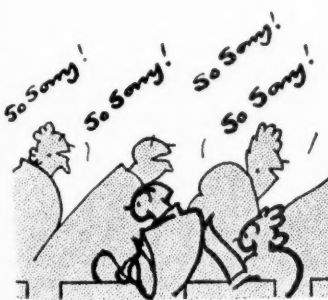
Why, I even like staying till the performance ends—



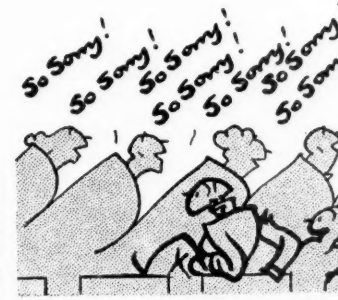
so that—



I can—



watch—



everyone else—



go out!"

I'M FUNNY THAT WAY.



*"Now, Mother, don't you think you ought to go and lie down and rest?"*

## Sad Case of the Wooden Banana

LET'S think of something else, shall we?

Personally I am rather exercised in mind about the people who make imitation ice-creams. I consider this to be a harmless preoccupation on my part and I propose, without your leave, to enlarge on it.

Under the heading "imitation ice-creams," I include—at least I think I do at this early stage of the argument—all apparently edible objects intended solely to delight the eye and stimulate the appetite: imitation sundaes, imitation red, green, yellow and pink drinks, wax fruit salads—the things (to sum up) that they put in the window, and take out only about once a year.

There is, of course, one school of thought that holds all such objects to be genuine and constantly replaced, but I hardly think that such weary people-of-the-world as you and I need bother with it. Let us go straight on and consider what may be called the æsthetic problems behind the cardboard Knickerbocker Glory, the sorrow that I feel sure must gnaw at the heart of anyone engaged in the manufacture of cork-and-rubber grape-fruit squashes or celluloid cherry-and-banana splits.

Impermanence—but that is a minor objection, common to all art more or less. No, what I'm thinking of is the waste.

Look at this Rainbow Special, in which the only thing that really is what it pretends to be is the glass. I am not privy to the secrets of the—shall we say (yes, go on, give him a break [all right])?—confectioner, I wouldn't know

whether these brilliant hues are decorating cement or artificial silk, but I am at least sure they aren't edible. They're certainly a lot more permanent than if they were edible, and this being so, where will they be this time next year?

Still there? Unlikely. A faint unwelcome bloom, I should imagine, even a slight crop of moss, or anyway a coating of dust, is liable to spread over those delicate exposed surfaces after a little. I should think this would defy dusting; and, gossamer as the confection looks, it is hardly likely to be washable. In fact my idea is that no imitation ice-cream lasts more than a few months, a season. New ones appear every summer, and the old ones, chipped laboriously out of their valuable glass, shrivel in an incinerator. Phoo!

THINK then of the feelings of the artist concerned. Again and again he has to make objects because the almost identical objects he made a few months ago have got a little shop-soiled and must on that account be thrown away. Is that the frame of mind—and no one knows better than I that I haven't mentioned any frame of mind—in which a man produces his best work? Here in my deep pur-pull dreams, I say No.

You may say that you don't see how he could do any better. After all he does produce an object that is practically indistinguishable, when new, from the thing it imitates. A slight hoarseness is noticeable in my tone as I reply, "What kind of art is that?"

Do you know I was afraid of this: we've got on to abstract principles. Well, you needn't think I'm going to waste time trying to convince you that the function of art is not to reproduce. I know a stone wall when I see one. Come along this way out of the underbrush and consider Mr. Casey.

Mr. Casey—or his name may be Pulborough—is a maker of imitation confectionery. Far and wide is he known as a brilliant counterfeiter of whipped cream, an inspired coiner of banana-slices. Every now and then he has to pay doctor's fees for a colleague who mistook one of his canvas bits of angelica or majolica or whatever they call that stuff for a real one and ate it. He wears octagonal rimless pince-nez, unless I'm thinking of somebody else, and his favourite flower is that of the potato. Born in 1871, he never looked back (so you know what a lot *he's* missed). His ready wit and unflinching good-humour, his constant concern for those less fortunate than—pardon me, I thought I was in an obituary column. He isn't dead yet so far as I know. He isn't even alive.

Now what are Mr. Casey's thoughts as he sets out to blow the brilliant bubble of an artificial cherry (if it is blown, and not laid down or welded)? Can you doubt, after what I have told you, that they are tinged with gloom! "I create, so far as I can see," says Mr. Casey to himself in a melancholy tone, "for the dustbin. A few hasty glances are thrown at the work on which I have lavished my skill and experience," thinks Mr. Casey, "a little ignoble greed is (I think I may say without boasting) stimulated, and then all's," Mr. Casey says to himself, quoting Housman, "to do again."

IT is while these dismal thoughts inhabit his mind. I remember, that he is blowing his artificial cherry. What I suggest is that there cannot but be something a little unsatisfactory about a cherry blown in such circumstances. What you suggest, if I understand you rightly, is that nobody will notice and who cares anyway?

Well, you may be right. Now can I interest you in some of the weather we've been having lately? R. M.



"I can tell it blindfold!"

## Civil Air Guard

Spin

("Dropped from the Zenith like a Falling Star.")

LIKE most people I have often wondered what it would feel like to fall off the Eiffel Tower. This evening, like everybody else who learns to fly, I am going to find out. I am, in short, about to learn how to spin.

For this sinister purpose my Instructor and I have abandoned the cabin aeroplane in which we used to sit cosily side by side and have strapped ourselves into a machine with proper cockpits in which he sits austere in front and I humbly behind, and we communicate through ear-phones and a speaking-tube. Having made sure that our powerful harness is securely buckled and our helmets properly adjusted we take off and climb to three thousand feet and my Instructor then explains what he is going to do.

"An aeroplane," he says, "will go into a spin if it stalls with any of the controls in an extreme position." He pulls back the throttle and the roar of the engine suddenly ceases. "We keep the nose of the machine up by easing back the stick," he continues with a new distinctness, "and when we see that our speed has been reduced to about fifty miles an hour we pull the stick right back and, as we intend to spin to the left, we put on full left rudder."

This manoeuvre, of course, is deliberately inviting a calamity and the aeroplane does not fail to accept the invitation. For an instant it hangs motionless in the air and I wait, filled with a horrid misgiving. Then, suddenly, it takes the plunge. My breath leaves my body with a gasp, the horizon shoots up above my head and is replaced by a dizzy abyss of revolving fields and my stomach is torn violently from my middle and flies off on its own. We whirl horribly round and round as if we were descending into the maelstrom but, just as I am beginning to think, not without a certain relief, that our last hour has come, the matter-of-fact voice of my Instructor comes faintly to my ears.

"To recover from the spin," it says laconically, "we put on full opposite rudder and push the stick forward." The fields cease revolving. "We then centralise the rudder so that the aeroplane will not start spinning in the opposite direction and lastly we pull the aeroplane out of the dive." As he says this the fields suddenly rush down out of sight, the horizon whips below the nose of the aeroplane and my stomach, as if fired from a catapult, resumes its position with such violence that I am pinned to my seat by its weight.

I feel a little sick. I think that I have had enough spinning and would like to go home. But the engine has resumed its

accustomed roar and we are climbing back to three thousand feet.

"Now," says my Instructor relentlessly, "I'll just show you a spin to the right and then you can try a few for yourself."

He shows me a spin to the right and I feel a little more sick. We climb back to three thousand feet.

"Now you've got her," says my Instructor, holding his hands above his head to show that he, at any rate, has not got her. I am too weak to argue.

"I've got her," I seem to reply, although, owing to my helmet and the roar of the engine, I cannot hear my voice.

Obediently I spin to the left. With the cold sweat breaking out on my brow I spin to the right. To make perfectly certain that I have got the hang of the thing I do another spin to the left. I now feel very sick indeed. One more spin, I think to myself, and I shall actually be sick. As it seems that we are once more about to climb to three thousand feet I make a despairing effort.

"I say!" I shout voicelessly. "I think, if you don't mind, that I've had enough for to-day."

"Oh, do you think so?" says my Instructor, disappointed. "You're quite sure that you've got it all weighed up?"

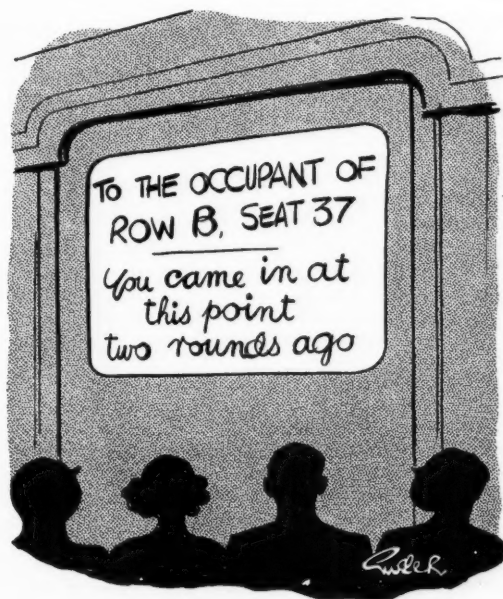
I am not sure. But I do not want to be sick.

"I am sure," I reply.

We return to the aerodrome and I still feel sick. As I release myself palely from my harness I wonder why people should complain of storms in the Bay of Biscay. Rather than spin again, I say to myself, I will round the Horn under sail, I will constantly re-cross the Channel in rough weather, I will gather samphire. But after half an hour I cease feeling sick. "Three times," I remind myself, "you recovered from a spin all by yourself." I begin to feel proud and courageous and after a night's rest—such is the inconstancy of human nature—I madly persuade myself that I would like to spin again.

## Commercial Candour

"— makes really delicious cups of coffee with the minimum of ease."—*Advt.*





## Court of Inquiry

IT is 21.00 hours on the last day of our month's training, we have been working since six o'clock, and we are all very tired. We are also all, with the exception of Captain Crabbe who likes such things, very cross at having to attend a court of inquiry; but then Crabbe is of an inquiring turn of mind.

We summon Sgt. Pike before the court, and Captain Crabbe reads aloud to him a description of the fire wherein damage was caused to War Office property in the shape of five panels of a tent, bell, in use at a site near Utter Dithering. Sgt. Pike, who in all probability dictated most of the description to the C.S.M., listens as if to an absorbing narrative with an air of elaborate interest which only partially veils his uneasiness; for Sgt. Pike as detachment-commander is the man responsible for all equipment at that site. Standing smartly to attention he gives his evidence in a wooden voice which betrays only too clearly a day of careful rehearsal.

It was evening, the tent was deserted, the three sentries were some

distance away, and "all of a sudden the 'ole tent bursts into flames. I sounds the alarm, and in a few minutes we 'as the inflagation well under control." No, Sgt. Pike had not been in the tent just before, nor had he seen anyone else in there. They just didn't use that tent much.

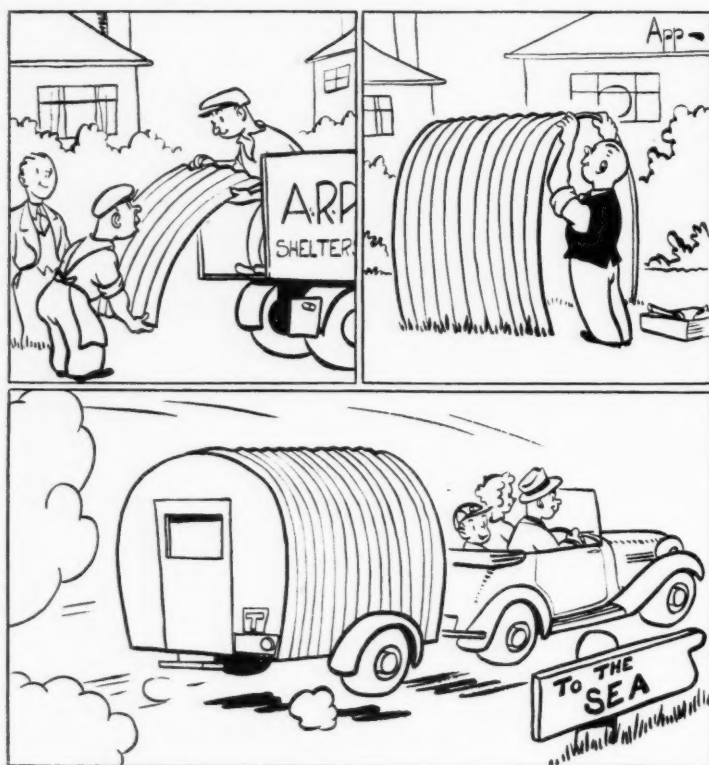
"Had you been smoking recently?" queries Lieut. Pullet suddenly.

That was far too transparent for Pike. "What, me?" he says virtuously. "Not in a tent, Sir, I wouldn't do that. In any case, I'm practically a non-smoker."

There is a short but pregnant silence while we all leer sceptically at Pike's nicotine-stained fingers which have all the appearance of being carved out of some well-seasoned chimney seat.

"Where was the paraffin lamp?" demands Captain Crabbe, still laboriously writing down Pike's evidence. "The one that should have been in the tent."

Sgt. Pike considers what he ought to say to this. "At the top of the tent-pole, Sir."



"Attached to what?" queries Pullet craftily.

"On a nai . . ." Sgt. Pike sees the trap and withdraws hurriedly. Nails in tent-poles are Major Trout's abomination. "Tied on with a piece of wire, Sir," he amends.

Pullet tries not to look thwarted, Crabbe continues to write, and Parrot pursues his occupation of drawing an endless series of hippopotami (back view), each one smaller than the last.

We dismiss Pike and Sapper Prawn is introduced. He licks his lips nervously, fixes his eyes on a point seven feet up the wall behind us and recites Sgt. Pike's evidence, substituting the third person for the first and making a number of disconcerting references to "the flaming tent."

Spr. Prawn, it turns out, is also a non-smoker, to such an extent that he is nauseated by the merest whiff of tobacco smoke. We forbear from speculation on the state of his stomach after sleeping for a month in the same tent as Sgt. Pike, who smokes an endless succession of hand-rolled cigarettes, and after gleaning from him the information that the paraffin lamp was definitely at the foot of the tent-pole we dismiss him.

Crabbe adds to his written evidence, Pullet starts blacking in the "A's" in *A Manual of Military Law*, and Parrot, having got down to a hippopotaminus-cule the size of a pinhead, stops drawing hippopotami (back view) and turns to human heads (side view). They all have deep eye-sockets, peculiar backs to their heads, incredibly slender necks, and ears in varying but always unnatural positions. The eye-brows, however, are good.

Spr. Dace is admitted, repeats the Pike special bulletin and astounds the court into attention by the admission that he was smoking five minutes before the fire occurred. This, however, is merely a ruse to make things more realistic. For Dace was at the cook-house at the time, and (master-stroke of Pike's!) was chided by Spr. Sole—the orderly—for extinguishing his cigarette stub in Sole's washing-up water. We hastily summon Sole, cut short his version of the Pike bulletin, and learn that this is actually so. Staying only to hear from Dace that the paraffin lamp was under the brailing of the tent and from Sole that it was in the cook-house thirty yards away we declare the inquiry finished and consider our finding.

It is a clear case of spontaneous combustion, and we sign accordingly, shaking Parrot awake and pushing the pen into his numbed fingers. He automatically starts on a hippopota-



mus which we hurriedly smear, and his signature is duly appended. Tomorrow we are civilians again, and it will be at least six months before our report is condemned as inadequate and returned to us. In the meantime, perhaps we can wheedle from Sgt. Pike the exact position of the paraffin lamp—or all four of them.

But it will take an awful lot of beer.

## Euripides

**E**URIPIDES is my chauffeur. He speaks no English, but I speak a little Greek, and we carry on a halting conversation with a vocabulary of a few hundred words.

His attitude is that of many drivers. "I am the owner of this car," he says; "I have passed the test and the Government has sold me a licence, so beware!" Our first drive together made this only too plain. We approached a bad bend in the road at 40 m.p.h. "For the Lord's sake slow down," I told him. He slowed down to the still excessive speed of twenty, and pulled up just short of a score of camels in column of threes. There was silence for a few miles. Suddenly he turned to me: "How, Sir," he asked, "did you know those camels were round that bend?"

Euripides has many trials to contend with. There is an unpleasant season of the year when the heat expands the leather on the home-made boots which the country people wear and the nails drop out. The only safe way to avoid punctures, Euripides assures me, is to pass through built-up areas at a speed not less than 50 m.p.h.

Then there are the donkeys and the camels, animals with a bias on their legs which takes them to the right-hand side of the road. At the first and second hoots they do nothing, but on the third the more conscientious ones start to move over to the left. Things begin to be serious if the riders are awake, but fortunately at most seasons and on most roads one can disregard that possibility.

It is Euripides' boast that he has never had an accident. He has been near it on several occasions and his narrowest escape, so he tells me cheerfully, was this. He was then the owner of an old German car with a peculiar arrangement of the ignition switch by which a turn to the left switched the engine on, while a turn to the right locked the steering. In the back of this car on the day in question was a party of his friends

returning from a day's shooting in the mountains. They were sitting, according to the custom of the country, with their guns, fully loaded and cocked, across their knees in case an opportunity of a shot should present itself. The car climbed to the top of a pass and below them was a steep descent and an opportunity for saving petrol which Euripides could never resist. He switched off the engine, but turned the switch too far. Heads hit the roof, trigger-fingers tightened and, with a salvo of gun-shots, the car left the road, turned over three times, and

came to rest in a clump of arbutus. While the party in the back were crossing themselves and calling on the names of the saints and Euripides was trying to climb out of the window, there was a crackling of branches, the car turned yet another three somersaults and came to rest on the road a hundred feet below the place where it had left it. The engine was then started up and the journey proceeded.

Thus with the help of heaven and Euripides' presence of mind was a serious accident avoided.



*"The Green is way over them trees; on the other 'and, the Club 'Ouse is only just be'ind yer!"*



POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS—LIFE UP IN TOWN

### Suspicion

**T**HEN walked Suspicion, born of Dread,  
Upon the world's high road:

"What carry you in your pouch?" she said,  
"What hide you in your load?  
What menace does your clasp conceal?  
Within your smile what edge of steel?"

"If you come from a country part," she said,  
"And are not over-wise,  
I will tear the flower from your heart," she said,  
"And the distance from your eyes;  
I will pull the dreams from out your quest,  
And you shall go doubting, like the rest.

"If you are of council or guild," she said,  
"And come from city or town,  
I will stay your hands that build," she said,  
"I will pull your temples down,

I will shake the houses you have made;  
And you shall go whispering and afraid.

"If you come from a mighty race,"  
she said,  
"Compassionate to mankind,  
I will shut a door in your face," she said,  
"And cause your eyes to blind;  
And you shall walk warily, nor know  
The difference 'twixt friend and foe."

Thus spake Suspicion: a cold stir  
Filtered the highways through;  
But some there were that went clear  
of her  
Nor even her shadow knew,  
And kept the flag of Truth unfurled:  
Fighting or still, these saved the world.



### THE ENEMY WITHIN THE GATES

*Policeman Hoare:* "I'm counted the kindest of men, but I mean to stop this!"

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## Impressions of Parliament

### Synopsis of the Week

**Monday, July 24th.**—Lords: Agricultural Development Bill given Second Reading.

**Commons:** Prevention of Violence (Temporary Provisions) Bill given Second Reading.

**Tuesday, July 25th.**—Lords: Finance Bill given Second Reading.

**Commons:** British Overseas Airways Bill taken in Committee. War Risks and Members' Fund Bills passed. Supplementary Estimates for Army and R.A.F. agreed to.

**Wednesday, July 26th.**—Lords: Debate on Fuel in War.

**Commons:** I.R.A. Bill passed.

**Thursday, July 27th.**—Lords: I.R.A. Bill given First Reading. Other Measures advanced.

**Commons:** Old Age Pensions debated on Labour Censure Motion.

**Monday, July 24th.**—Statements by the FOREIGN SECRETARY on the Tokyo Negotiations and the HUDSON-WOHLTAT Talk were similar to those of the P.M. in the Commons. The Lordsspent a busy day, and gave a Second Reading to the Farming Bill, after slight indignation at the speed with which it was being pushed through had subsided.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN read out to the Commons the formula agreed on by the British and Japanese Governments as a basis for the conference; it notes that the Japanese forces in China have "special requirements" and that therefore the British Government do not intend to get in the way. Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON suggested that it amounted to a *de facto* recognition of Japanese sovereignty over annexed Chinese territory, but Mr. CHAMBERLAIN denied this and assured Mr.

GREENWOOD that no change in British policy in China was to be inferred.

Nor did Mr. HUDSON's conversation with Herr WOHLTAT, the German economist, signify any change in the relations between this country and Germany. It had been entirely private and unofficial, and when Mr. HUDSON

very thoroughly; it included instructions for damaging water-supplies, drainage and the electricity grid. The police had been wonderful, but they were badly handicapped without the powers for which he was asking. (These extend the right of search and authorise deportation, prohibition of entry and the enforcement of registration in the case of suspects.)

The Opposition mostly agreed that the Bill was called for, but both Socialists and Liberals thought its powers unnecessarily arbitrary, and a small group of Socialists went into the Lobby against it.

**Tuesday, July 25th.**—That faithful old horse, the Finance Bill, reared its ugly face in the Lords this afternoon, when Lord STRABOLGI said rude things about the horse-power tax and Lord ARNOLD insisted that for modern times the Bill held the record for unsound finance. Lord SAMUEL was critical of the Government's earlier inaction with regard to armament profits, but he was cheerful enough to say that he believed that when armament expenditure ceased unemployment figures would not rise, for there would be a compensating expansion of trade as confidence was born again. Lord STAMP spoke encouragingly of the great strength of our economic structure, and the House got

away in good time, resisting the temptation provided by the Prevention of Damage by Rabbits Bill to sit up all night over its favourite topic.

After the P.M. had given a firm negative to Mr. MANDER's most inconsiderate suggestion that the House should meet once a week through August and September, and Mr. GALLACHER, to his own immense sur-



Lord Snell. "WHO LET THE CAT OUT OF THAT BAG?"

Lord Halifax. "JUST WHAT I'M WONDERING MYSELF!"

had agreed that other countries might help Germany financially he had insisted that any loan must be conditional on a restoration of confidence. The Cabinet, said Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, knew nothing of the conversation until afterwards, and he had no intention of entering on the discussions suggested. As to who gave away the conversation, that was something he would very much like to know.

In moving the Second Reading of his Bill For the Better Stymieing of the I.R.A., Sir SAMUEL HOARE disclosed the gravity of the situation. From rather ludicrous beginnings, in which white-faced young thugs scattered suitcases full of alarm-clocks which failed to go off, it has become genuinely menacing; the Houses of Parliament have been threatened, Hammersmith Bridge, Southwark Power Station and the aqueduct on the North Circular Road have only just escaped destruction, and Sir SAMUEL told the House that he had definite proof that the campaign was being "actively stimulated by foreign organisations." The key document, known as Plan S, which had been seized, was worked out



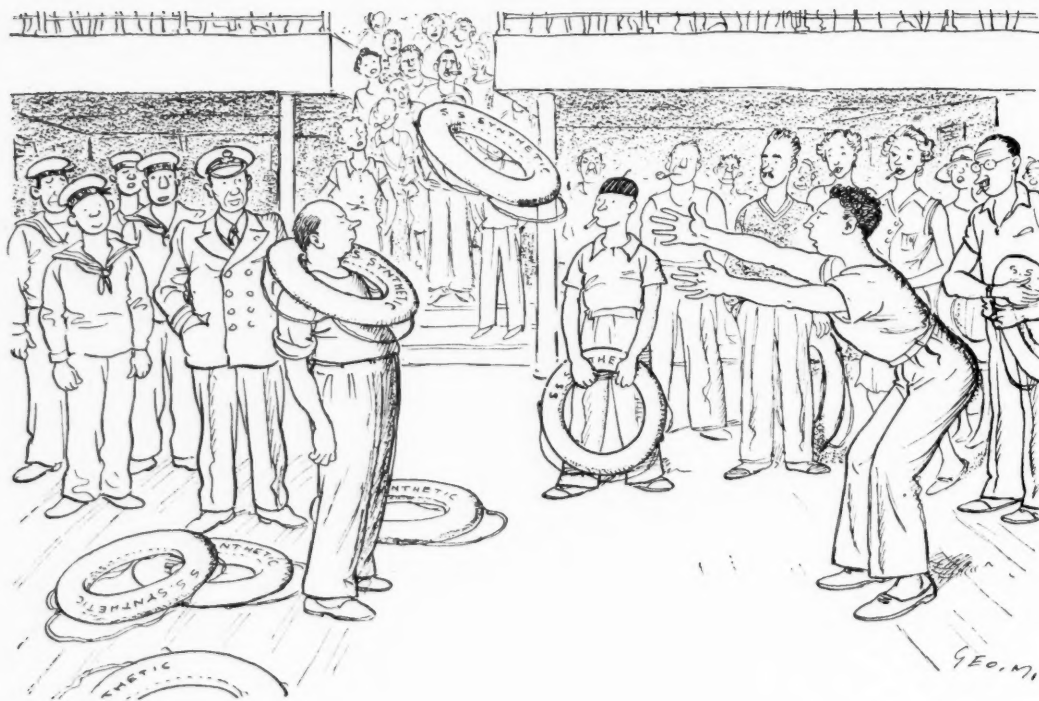
THE (WEST) FIFE SOLO

MR. GALLACHER



"KEEPING WATCH FOR POOR PAT"

MR. WEDGWOOD BENN



*Deck Quoits for Heroes*

prise, had been given leave to bring in a Bill obliging Members to disclose directorships, expectations from aunts, etc. (the notion being to Purge the Dross from politics), the Commons had an entertaining discussion on the best title for the new air corporation, a number of unexciting names being suggested. The danger is that the corporation, if called British Overseas Airways, may become known by all or some of its initials. Sir KINGSLEY WOOD agreed to postpone the final christening.

*Wednesday, July 26th.*—Alarmed by the fact that ninety per cent. of our oil comes to us through the kindness of foreigners, Lord AILWYN urged that we should change over to the use of British coal on the seas and on the roads. Lord STANHOPE gave him a convincing answer. The loss of a major naval battle, he said, might bring us starvation, and the handicap of coal-firing might easily bring such a loss; dual-firing for a cruiser of ten thousand tons meant a drop of twelve-and-a-half per cent. in maximum speed, twenty-five per cent. in maximum endurance, and a fifty per cent. increase in engineering problems.

The Commons passed the I.R.A. Bill with admirable calm, seeing that a bad explosion had just taken place at King's Cross. On the Third Reading there was no division. The Opposition remained unhappy about the infringement of liberties, and Sir SAMUEL HOARE, rejecting the suggestion that his authority to expel should depend on the approval of a Judge of the High Court, offered to be advised by men of standing who would hear the prisoners' defence. This seemed a reasonable concession.

*Thursday, July 27th.*—The Lords agreed among themselves to waste no time in passing the I.R.A. Bill. They intend to put it through its remaining stages to-morrow, so that it could go to the Commons (sitting specially late for the occasion) and return for the Royal Assent.

The Labour motion of censure on the Government for its refusal to increase old age pensions was easily defeated after a remarkable speech by the P.M. which was firm but brought new hope to those—and they are of all parties—who believe that old people should at least have enough to eat in an age of plenty.

Both Mr. GREENWOOD and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, with a General Election in view, paid the other side ironical tributes on the score of liveliness of conscience. Mr. GREENWOOD spoke of the grinding poverty which was a far more real problem to a large section of the community than the possibility of war, and asked for a pound a week for the single at sixty-five and thirty-five shillings for a married couple, while persons of sixty should get similar pensions if they "had little prospect of employment." Such a scheme, said Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, could not be expected from a responsible Government faced not only with the colossal initial cost of rising armaments but with their upkeep, a point often forgotten. But he was entirely sympathetic to the position of old people, and proposed to institute an immediate inquiry into the suggestion that the present contributions to social insurance by the workers, the employers and the State should be raised.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's speech made a great impression on the House, which voted by 357 to 164 for Mr. ROWLAND's amendment welcoming the inquiry.

## A Calendar of Crisis

**S**UNDAY'S my big-gun day  
When I read *The Sunday Scare*,  
Imbibing rumour and report  
I find a most attractive sort  
Of sharp self-immolating sport.  
There's trouble in the air,  
And you get it in *The Scare*.

Then, too, there's Monday . . .  
I'm always hoping one day  
I'll pick up a thrill  
Of imminent ill  
I've overlooked on Sunday.  
Breakfast would be  
No meal to me  
Without a Monday crisis-apogee.

Tuesday—that's always my bad news-day.

You can't deny, however you try,  
Things get worked up by Tuesday,  
When Duces, Fuehrers and  
Caudillos,

Dressed up like shining armadillos,  
Threatening earth and air and billows  
Send us shivering to our pillows . . .  
Yes, Tuesday's my true blues-day.  
I'd hate to miss the latest tall  
News-item whispered in White-hall.

Wednesday's an immense day,  
A very taut and tense day.  
For then the hush-hush magazines  
Publish their hints-behind-the-scenes.  
Full details of the might-have-beens  
If not for all the unforeseens  
Are out on sale on Wednesday.

And what of Thursday . . . ?  
You couldn't have a worse day  
For summing up the situation

In terms of coming tribulation.  
For every week-end's consternation  
Thursday is my rehearse-day.

But my day's Friday,  
A whopping wipe-your-eye day.  
I take an early gin-and-bitters  
In preparation for the jitters  
I know I'll get on Friday,  
My pet how-when-and-why day.

It makes me fit for Saturday,  
That regular Mad-Hatter day  
Which gives a whole bright after-noon  
To shiver at what's coming soon  
And wonder when  
Those Two Bad Men  
Will send up the balloon.

It must come one day,  
It's moving in the air . . .  
(I'll know just when on Sunday  
When I get *The Sunday Scare*.)



"What d'yer think I'd get for 'er under the 'ammer?"  
"Oh, I dunno—maybe a flowerin' shrub an' a balloon."

## At the Play

"THE DEVIL TO PAY" (HIS MAJESTY'S)

NEW verse plays are much to be welcomed, for they may provide the tonic which the British theatre so badly needs; but so far as I can judge they have the unfortunate effect of bringing on an average audience a partial paralysis of its sense of humour. In spite of our Elizabethan heritage we British have an uncomfortable feeling that verse implies a solemnity not lightly to be disregarded, and when in addition the theme of a play takes the form of an ethical debate garnished materially with visitors of high rank from other worlds, then our reverence is proof against almost any light relief. I did think that when the *Devil* in this play remarked that he had come by underground there would have been a laugh, but all that happened was a faint rustle as if the Vicar had dropped his pince-nez into the bottom of the pulpit. Not that it was a tremendous joke, nor that Miss DOROTHY SAYERS thought it was when she wrote it; but still, it was a joke, and quite the sort of thing one expects a proper devil to say every now and then.

The play was first produced in the Chapter House at Canterbury, which must have been a perfect setting for it, during the Festival there last June; it is the *Faustus* story presented from a new angle.

Period and scene Miss SAYERS has retained, but she makes her hero experiment with the idea of doing his fellows a bit of good in a sticky world rather than for the Renaissance purposes of finding out how the supernatural wheels go round or for gaining worldly promotion. In the preface to the printed edition of the play she suggests that the present generation of Englishmen needs no warning "against the passionate pursuit of knowledge for its own sake," and explains that she sees her hero in terms of the present as "the type of the impulsive reformer, over-sensitive to suffering, impatient of the facts, eager to set the world right by a sudden overthrow . . ." Her

*Faustus*, shocked and infuriated by the pain and humiliation for which he considers an omnipotent God has thoughtlessly let in mankind, endeavours a magical short-circuit; and it is not

falls back on the escapist expedient of buying absolute innocence for the traditional term of twenty-four years. When the heavenly *Judge* comes to consider *Faustus'* case in the last scene

his soul is discovered to have changed into the likeness of a most attractive black spaniel pup. *Mephistopheles*, who has no eye for a dog (which perhaps explains his fall), considers himself swindled, and the *Judge*, shrewdly observing, I suspect, that here is no old lag but merely a member of the Liberal Party who has lost his head, offers the unfortunate magician the choice of wandering for ever, ignorant of God and joy, or doing time with the *Devil*. *Faustus* chooses the latter, and the *Judge*, confirmed in his optimistic view of him, holds out a vague promise that the time shall be dated. A happy ending, in fact, which MARLOWE rejected; happy, that is, if you discount a long period of highly efficient incineration.

How does all this go on the stage? To my mind, not very well. I confess that I enjoyed reading the play much more than I enjoyed seeing it. It seems to me that so abstract a debate as the one about who invented evil, and why, can only in verse be made sufficiently dramatic for the theatre by a poetic genius; and this Miss SAYERS is not, great as is her gift with words. The play is good enough to make extremely interesting reading, and it is put together well, but it lacks the flights of pure poetry which set a stage on fire. Parts of the production are effective, parts too slow; visually it works up to an impressive end.

Mr. FRANK NAPIER's lively, humorous *Mephistopheles* is excellent, and so is Mr. DAVID PHETHEAN's *Wagner*, a fine faithful clod; Mr. FISHER WHITE speaks the *Pope's* long speech beautifully, and Mr. RAF DE LA TORRE gives the *Judge* dignity and a voice. But I was disappointed in the *Faustus* of Mr. HARCOURT WILLIAMS (who also produced). He might have been a mild country doctor with a charming manner, but a man burnt up with the wrongs of his fellows, a courageous adventurer, a great lover, never.

ERIC.



ZERO HOUR IN THE MAGIC CIRCLE

John Faustus . . . MR. HARCOURT WILLIAMS  
Christopher Wagner . MR. DAVID PHETHEAN

until he finds how much more trouble his well-meant efforts stir up that he



SUPREME JUDGMENT

Mephistopheles . . . MR. FRANK NAPIER  
The Judge . . . MR. RAF DE LA TORRE  
John Faustus . . . MR. HARCOURT WILLIAMS



### RAM GOPAL AND HIS HINDU DANCERS (ALDWYCH)

WE have all read of the relaxations of Eastern potentates, how they summon pleasure in the form of graceful and cunning dancers, and are, upon occasion, so carried away with delight that they bestow half a kingdom, their own or somebody else's, upon those who have leapt or wriggled to such purpose before them. Some of the sensations of Eastern potentatehood can be enjoyed now at the Aldwych Theatre, where RAM GOPAL has brought from India an entertainment fit for kings. We must add that it is entertainment for kings of a superior and, indeed, rather intellectual type. These Hindu dances are stories told in gesture. The arms, and the hands, are more important than the legs and the feet, and while the dancer moves slowly over the stage, the action is centred in the movements of his arms. It is so that we see the God Siva, creating, maintaining, and, at the last, destroying the world, or India, and the God of Thunder riding his white elephant, so that we see, in what is perhaps the finest dance, that of the Setting Sun, the moon and stars and the sun itself fulfilling their courses.

In a lighter mood, when RAM GOPAL is a strutting peacock, the play of arms and hands brings out the pride and the invitation to poor peahens, and in the most ambitious dance, a Cobra Devil-Dance of Malabar, it is the arms, and a skilful use of the wrists, which suggest the snake. In all these dances—and it is a full programme—there is a great dignity and a reticence, and the dancers never lose their self-control. There is no ecstasy or intoxication, but the grave and beautiful accomplishment of a ritual, the telling of stories by movement.

Sometimes, as in the Marwari folk-dance by MAYA RANI and RETNA MOHINI, or in the Kite dance of MAYA RANI, we may find ourselves reminded of dumb crambo, and feel we are being invited to guess movements very easily guessed. But for most of the dances we need a clue before we can appreciate them for their meaning, and we should not be happy without the clue because they are so obviously narrative dances.

RAM GOPAL in most of his

dances shows a severe restraint. His body is taut, with quivering muscles and lithe sinuous action, but his head, perhaps moving in quick jerky movements of his neck, is the head of a

sion that, although his head may be following the action of his hands, he is not looking at them.

He and his team take their applause with their hands joined in supplicatory prayer: it is a small gesture, but it conveys the spirit of their performance, of dances taken from temples and performed before great lords.

Most Europeans who see these dances only see them in the East, with a full appropriate background, and it is making the world a little small and easy to have them at the Aldwych in the heart of the ROBERTSON HARE country. There must be some mountains left for Mahomet to have to go to, and I am not sure that the old Hindu classical dances really lend themselves to indiscriminate transplantation. The dancers are immensely accomplished, but the audience is inevitably under-prepared, and loses a great deal. To which thought the answer may be made that it is not what they miss that matters, but what they capture, and their applause made it pretty obvious that they felt they had received a great deal of pleasure; that it is not necessary to know about Siva in order to enjoy RAM GOPAL, to enjoy his social dances, the wooings in which his generally settled cast of features is changed to expressions of sulkiness, of impudence, of sly expectancy, as

he comes, a god on holiday, among the maidens by the Jumna river. Nor, for that matter, is it really necessary to have clear ideas about the Hindu religion to feel the deeply reverential mood of the loftier dances.

The setting is unpretentious, the accompaniment flute and drum, the hangings plain, through the dances no word is spoken from the stage, and the dances recall their watchers to the dignity of an immemorially old civilisation.

I could well understand that these unexpected entertainers had had a great success in New York. They must have been a refreshment and comfort after the saxophone and the modern band conductors who sing and shout their familiarities and vulgarities as they use sound as a primary source of confusion. These Hindu dancers use motion as a source of harmony and order. D. W.



CLOTHES AND THE WOMAN  
MAYA RANI IN THE PEACOCK DANCE

detached and dispassionate person. The dancer's difficulty of where to look and what to do with his eyes does not exist for him, for he is able to look nowhere at all, to convey the impres-



ARMS AND THE MAN  
RAM GOPAL



"We close at one on Thursday, Madam."

### The Trap

**R**EMEMBER! Whatever happens—even if they go down on all-fours to ask us—we won't stay to tea," hissed Laura dramatically. "That's settled."

I might well have added: (a) That it had been settled already before leaving London, settled twice in the car on the way down, settled again as we drove through Brill Parva when at last we found it, and settled for the fifth, sixth and seventh times as we turned in at the gates; (b) That an elderly couple receiving two complete strangers for the sole purpose of

showing them the house they wished to let, were almost certainly unlikely to go down on all-fours for any purpose whatever, invitations to tea included.

Actually there was no time to reply anything at all before the door opened, and the name of the elderly couple—spoken, heard and written with no slightest hesitation for days and days past—had gone straight out of one's head, never to come into it again until the middle of the following night, when it was of no use to anybody.

The parlour-maid, looking at us rather unfavourably, asked if we had

come about the house, and on receiving an assent, showed us into the drawing-room, on the very threshold of which Laura muttered in my ear from behind: "Remember! Not tea, whatever happens."

Then we were being received by a very kind woman in a grey coat and skirt who reminded Laura, she said afterwards, of her Aunt Gertrude and reminded me, by a rather curious coincidence, of a Mrs. Pattington once met at Eastbourne, although when Laura and I compared notes later it was obvious that the appearances of Aunt Gertrude and Mrs. Pattington held no single point in common.

The house, as became evident in a moment, bore very little relationship to the picture of it that had been raised in one's mind's eye by the agents. However, having motored all those miles, and the woman in the grey coat and skirt being so kind, there was of course nothing for it but to go over it from attic to cellar, explaining as we went that we were doing all this on behalf of cousins—(Laura's)—on their way home from the East.

The lady of the house said she quite understood—and it was, in fact, not difficult—and that there was a sun-porch at the side of the house which should appeal to people home from the East, especially if we were to have any sun this summer—a question which had been, so far, not even doubtful.

After that, everything was more or less subordinated to the Far Eastern element, even to a small water-colour sketch of Mount Vesuvius which had—said the owner—got into the house no one knew how, and was hanging over the bathroom door, and reminded her, in some ways, of a description that she had once read somewhere of the Mosque of Islam.

Even when we were being shown the store-cupboard, we spoke of the Federated Malay States, although in my own opinion a more apt reference would have been to the Black Hole of Calcutta.

The only room we never saw was one called My husband's den, and from the way in which his wife stood outside it with the door-handle in one hand and said that it was really a very small room and she didn't know if we felt it was worth while—one realised instantly that the husband was within, and had told her that he was on no account to be disturbed.

Naturally, one played one's part.

Probably out of gratitude, she then immediately suggested that we should stay to tea.

Laura's kick was as painful as it was unnecessary, and one replied with the

excuse that had already been decided upon (fifteen times) on the way down. "Thank you so much, but we have to get back to our hotel to pick up a friend whom we are taking to London."

"Which hotel is that?" said Aunt Gertrude's (or Mrs. Pattington's) double, looking very alert and interested.

Laura and I, utterly involuntarily, looked at one another.

"What *was* its name?" said Laura, flushing a most extraordinary crimson.

"I can't remember, for the moment," I replied, with forced carelessness.

The owner of the house became more and more alert and interested—at least, judging from her expression as she gazed piercingly at us.

"Was it an hotel in Brill Magna, or just our little village inn here at Brill Parva?"

"One of those in Brill Magna," Laura said firmly. "I can't at the moment remember its name, but I shall know it when I see it."

"Perhaps it was the 'Plume of Feathers'?"

"No," said Laura, just at the same moment as I said Yes, that was it.

"There are only two hotels in Brill Magna that one would care to stay at. If it *wasn't* the 'Plume of Feathers,' it was perhaps the 'Rose and Crown'?"

This time, with readier presence of mind, we simultaneously acknowledged, with cries of affectionate recognition, "The Rose and Crown."

"It's quite a nice hotel, isn't it?"

We both said that it was delightful. Indeed, in the relief of the moment, one is inclined to feel that one said more about its merits than could possibly carry conviction.

"Still," said Laura as we drove off, "I think we got away with it, all right. I shouldn't have liked that nice woman to feel we didn't *want* to stay and have tea with her."

"We might perhaps have been cleverer about *which* hotel we had to go to. I thought we sounded rather confused."

"Well, she helped us out of that," said Laura callously. "I thought we were tremendously eloquent about

'The Rose and Crown.' Almost too much so. See how many stars it's really got in the book."

I retrieved the book from beneath Laura's hat, my gloves, the shopping-basket, the blue rug and the two rain-coats, and then there was a silence.

"Well?" said Laura.

"Well, she was quite right. There are only two hotels in Brill Magna. And neither of them is 'The Rose and Crown.' So there's no such place."

E. M. D.

#### More British Barbarity

"Answering a question of what should be done with these dangerous terrorists, he said interment suggested itself, but he did not like interment."—*Cambridge Paper*.

"They saw—

A total of 64 bowls bowled by the West Indian bowlers, and 11 runs scored."

*Sunday Paper*.

In goloshes?



"I couldn't get anyone to take care of Timothy, dear, so I'm afraid he will have to come with us."



## No Change

RECENT correspondence in *The Times* supporting the idea that our ancestors regarded affairs with much the same sturdy pessimism as ourselves, makes the moment seem opportune for the publication of a private and probably spurious letter from my paternal great-grandfather, written some time in the roaring 'forties to a Miss Noke, of Weybridge. Miss Noke was, of course, a niece of the famous Laughing Johnson of Pontefract, the inventor of the prismatic whey-curdler, and an irritating figure at the Court of George IV.

"My Dear Miss Noke" (the letter runs),—"I am newly come here from London where I saw all the plays, and I can assure you that if you have any idea of wasting coach-fare by travelling to town this season to do likewise, you would do well to abandon the project.

The standard of acting has never been at so low an ebb, in fact old playgoers are saying that since Garrick died there has been a steady decline. As for the plays themselves they are unspeakably bad, and Sheridan would turn in his grave if he could know how low the art of play-writing has fallen.

"Traffic conditions remain as bad as ever, and I had to wait in a queue nearly a mile long owing to a wagon being stuck fast in Temple Bar. The authorities seem quite unable to cope with the problem.

"The weather this year in London has been abominable, scarcely a dry day, and it has been terribly hot all June, though it is not so much the heat as the humidity that gets one down. Everybody is suffering from *la grippe*, as they call it there.

"As to public affairs, they have never been so bad. The country will

not stand the vacillating methods of Sir Robert Peel much longer, and the Opposition are calling for a strengthening of the Cabinet. There is a great uproar because an Englishman was made to stand on his head on the top of the leaning tower of Pisa, and all the British Government were able to do by way of protest was to suggest that in future a straight tower should be provided in such cases. Shades of Canning!

"War is expected, of course, in the autumn. It is difficult to see how it can be avoided when no other nation except our own seems to have any regard for pledges.

"If you hear of any good books you might let me know. Never, surely, has there been so much trash on the market. At the moment a young man named—I think—George Dickens is a popular favourite, but it is low stuff



"What'll yer do if teacher finds ye've been cribbin'?"  
 "Nuthin' ter me; got me Sigfried pants on."





*"Fresh eggs, mind—none of yer decontamination squad."*

and I will not allow it in the house. With young children one has to be careful.

"This new craze for education for the masses is looked upon with grave foreboding by responsible men, and I know for a fact that the lower classes do not want it. Is a man going to be a better workman because he knows that the sun goes round the earth? This sort of knowledge is of course essential for people in our position, and I am happy to say my younger son is doing well at Eton, though Eton, they say, is not what it was. I have, by the way,

been greatly disappointed in the past few numbers of *Punch*, which started so promisingly but seems to have steadily declined in quality. Of course in these days there are no artists and humour is practically dead, but can one wonder at it with taxes so high and everything so dear and trade so bad?

"To finish, however, on a brighter note. I feel that I must pay a brief tribute to Sir Robert Peel's new policemen. If I may coin a phrase, they are simply wonderful. Your sincere friend,  
JOHN SYMPSON."

"The Special Preachers for Hospital Sunday, June 11th, will be Dr. R. —, a well-known London Physician at 10.45 and Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's at 6.30 p.m."—*Local Monthly*.

A double life, eh?

○ ○  
"BIDE A WEE  
AT THE  
JOIE DE VIVRE."

Notice outside Cornish tea-garden.

Och, là là!



"Dear Tubby,—Thanks for P.C. Wish you were here.—Bingo."

### Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Annals of Hungary

As a possible item on the Nazi menu, Hungary merits more consideration than is usually given her by the Europe to which she so precariously belongs. It is chiefly this element of precariousness that makes *The History of Hungary* (SELWYN AND BLOUNT, 10/6) such complicated reading; for with dynasties, boundaries, religion and alien immigration all so fluid, there is only a shrinking or expanding core of Magyar race and custom to hold the story together. The ÁRPÁDS, who produced ST. STEPHEN, give place to ANGEVINS, ANGEVINS to HAPSBURGS; Constantinople cedes to Rome; Huns, Turks and Germans filter in as unwanted guests or sweep the country as invaders. Yet there is always, from ANDREW II to KOSSUTH, that zeal for social perfection which first expressed itself in *The Golden Bull*, a greater and almost contemporary *Magna Carta*. This is the hopeful aspect of a national legend so unhappy that Hungarian ill-luck seems almost as endemic as the special mediæval disease known as *Morbus Hungaricus*. M. OTTO ZAREK tackles the intricacies, ethnological, ecclesiastical, social and political, of his task with spirit and learning. His translator has not perhaps quite sufficient idiomatic English for the popular exposition of so scholarly a theme.

#### Curate's Joy

THE REV. FRANCIS KILVERT, whose diary of the early 'seventies made such an excellent impression last year, does not, unfortunately, improve on acquaintance. In Volume Two he is in his thirties, ostentatiously sighing for one DAISY THOMAS but obviously preferring his amorous pains to the acceptance of a living that might have rendered matrimony possible. On the day one such benefice is cold-shouldered he buys a second-hand bagatelle-board and has his silver cup engraved with the motto "Peregrinamus," which "hath a lovely solemn sound"; and two years after his DAISY is still vainly lamenting her renegade swain. Mr. KILVERT has also developed a taste for what FITZGERALD called "pleasant atrocity," from details of the Cawnpore massacre to accounts of the murderers, maniacs and consumptives of his two curacies. There are exquisite and amusing things in *Kilvert's Diary*, Volume II (CAPE, 12/6): a Wordsworthian picture of bees in the jasmine on Candlemas morning, a sketch of the ladies of Liverpool riding donkeys in crinolines. There is also an interesting visit to the greatest of English pastoral poets, BARNES—enough, and more than enough, to heighten anticipation for the third and last volume that Mr. WILLIAM PLOMER has promised us.

#### "Life's Little Day"

Sometimes it is difficult to tell from their tones whether our wireless announcers are describing a world catastrophe or a tennis tournament; in much the same fashion Miss STORM JAMESON in her new book *Farewell, Night; Welcome, Day* (CASSELL, 7/6) gives incidents important or trivial so much the same portentousness that one reads on alternating between expectation and flatness. From the whole a portrait of a woman emerges, not a very lovable woman, but a woman of strong character who, expecting great things of life, dies disappointed. Danesacre with its seaside-houses, and life on board ship, make the principal back-grounds of her story. There are references to *Sylvia Russell's* quarrel with her mother, old *Mrs. Hervey*, and to the circumstances of her marriage at Dieppe, which give the book some of the drawbacks of a sequel; and it is definitely melancholy, grey with the futility of human hopes and the pathetic ugliness of human nature. The finest thing in it is the love of *Sylvia's* elder daughter for her difficult mother. Yet Miss JAMESON, having saddled herself with all these drawbacks, succeeds in creating one character at least who draws the authentic breath of life.

#### A Different Gipsy Smith

If, as Lady ELEANOR SMITH abruptly informs us, she was "born dead," she very quickly and thoroughly repaired that



"I thought we might weed the paths to-day, Brown."

initial error. She came, and has remained, a good deal more alive than most people. Perhaps the spanking which kindled the vital spark had something to do with it; and psychologists might trace its effect in that distressing moment when, at the age of four, she kicked a gardener in the stomach, or in the occasion when, having by this time come to the years supposed to be of discretion, she found herself, to her "horror and astonishment" and with perfect justification, smacking a Customs officer's face. Such occasional pugnacity is, however, but a by-product of her vitality. She is a friendly person, and friendliest with those in whom, in SYNGE's phrase, the stream of life runs "superb and wild." *Life's a Circus* (LONGMANS, 12/6) for her, a thing of movement and colour and not infrequent hazard. With much of that reckless courage which she admired in her father, of whom she writes with amusement and deep affection, she has sought and found adventure in many lands, both among the people of the circus, with whom she has lived as one of themselves, and among the gipsies, with whom she can talk intimately in their own tongue. Unsought adventures have also come to her, as in the remarkable episode of *Kid Spider* the gangster; and she has met two very interesting ghosts. The record of these things, told gaily and with a vivid economy, makes an enchanting book.

### Cats' Corner

When you have known and appreciated Mr. E. F. BENSON since the palmy days of *The Babe, B.A.*, you are apt to be impressed, pretty equally, by the sustained buoyancy of the novelist and the comparative deterioration of his material. It cannot be pretended that the middle-aged tabbies (male and female) of *Trouble for Lucia* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) are as attractive as the insouciant young Cantabs of old; but Mr. BENSON handles them all with the same aplomb, and the social rivalries of Tilling constitute an eminently suitable field for derisive observation. *Lucia* of course is the Mayor, her dearest enemy *Elizabeth Mapp-Flint*, the Mayoress; and municipal intrigue contributes a new element to the hazardous intercourse of this flat little town where everyone who "counts" is a climber. *Diva's* preposterous tea-shop rivals the mayoral parlour as a setting. A purely farcical duchess and a female novelist whose farcicality is only too literal contribute their quota of intrusion. And it is not until Tilling and *Lucia* unite to frustrate the insulting exploitation of the novelist that you realise how ingeniously the original coterie's aspirations have succeeded in enlisting your sympathies.



### PLEASANT—VERY

*Enraged Tradesman (knocked up at three a.m.).* "WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SIR, BY MAKING THIS DISTURBANCE AT THIS TIME O'NIGHT; BREAKING PEOPLES' NIGHT'S REST?"

*Inebriated Wanderer.* "HUSH—OH!—YOU'VE GOT A BITE! SHTRIKE HIM HARD. MAG—NIPSHNT FISH, SHEVER-I-SHEE—'PON MY WORD AN' HONOUR!"

Charles Keene, August 2nd, 1862

### Chaff in Egypt

Major C. S. JARVIS is a specialist in the presentation of life in Egypt and his subject certainly needs a specialist. *Life in Egypt* is made up of ideas and doings which have scarcely changed since the time of MOSES, mingled with



those which came into being yesterday and will have changed by to-morrow. The land is inhabited by people who belong to each period, and by those who belong to neither, but are determined to make the best of both worlds, or to make a good thing out of them in both senses of the term. There are those, that is to say, who are working with genuine public spirit for the welfare of the country and those who have an exceptional subtlety in serving their own ends. Then, too, there are the tourists who still find in the land and its monuments something of the fabled glamour of the East. Major JARVIS with long experience as the Governor of Sinai and an unfailing sense of humour knows exactly what value to set on all the individuals and groups in this queer amalgamation, and though it is the irresistible desire to be compelled to laugh that carries one through his book *The Back-Garden of Allah* (JOHN MURRAY, 7/6), one has gained at the end of it a very real impression of the serious side. There is a stealthy, almost oriental, cunning in the happy turn of many of his sentences, and wisdom and understanding constantly peep through his satire.

### Out-of-the-Way Augustans

When Professor JAMES SUTHERLAND admits that his seven new subjects "turned up when I was looking for other things," he challenges a curiosity which he subsequently gratifies in a particularly pleasing manner. These casual finds (one imagines of his excellent DEFOE research) range from obscure failures and criminals—who, as AUSTIN DOBSON once said, "should have fallen to the recording pen of the Ordinary of Newgate"—to the lesser-known passages of more noteworthy lives. The best are the former: "Burridge the Blasphemer"; mad "John Lacy and the Modern Prophets"; "Young Matthews," the gallant printer who issued a manifesto in favour of the Pretender and was hanged at eighteen; and "Miss Addison," who lived to expiate by a peculiarly inglorious spinsterhood her father's injudicious marriage into the peerage. "The Funeral of John, Duke of Marlborough," has its brighter moments—notably his SARAH's characteristic parsimony over the pall. The SWIFT study strikes one as a trifle congested with politics and philandering for its size. Extracts from the Press of the day, sandwiched between each article, aid the cumulative impression of "period" character which it is the successful business of *Background for Queen Anne* (METHUEN, 10/6) to convey.



"Now may I take a shot at my prize?"

### Hot Scent

Over-praise is no recommendation, and the quoted opinion of a friend who assures us that Mr. EDWARD ACHESON "seems at last to be a rival of Dorothy Sayers" is more likely to arouse scepticism than approval. That is a pity, because the author of *Murder to Hounds* (HARRAP, 7/6) writes a first-rate thriller. Like most writers of what one may call Anglo-American crime fiction, he knows his stuff and trusts to that knowledge, rather than to any extreme subtlety of plot-weaving, to entertain us. Incidentally it is interesting to find Virginia, once the happy hunting-ground of historical and sentimental novelists, turning up in an ultra-modern crime story. Perhaps Mr. ACHESON, from his *piéd-à-terre* on the other side of the Potomac, will give us another story, with or without hounds but with more Virginians in it.

### Topsyturvy

Mr. LEO BRUCE's droll investigator, *Sergeant Beef*, took time by its forelock in *Case With Four Clowns* (PETER DAVIES, 7/6) and, with his companion Mr. Townsend, joined a travelling circus because he had been informed that murder was, so to speak, in the air. But although jealousy, hatred and malice were prevalent enough among *Jacobi's* troupe, a considerable time passed before the crime for which *Beef* was waiting occurred. Mr. BRUCE combines a vivid account of life in a circus that is here to-day and there to-morrow with an investigation that is conducted on humorous and original lines. In fact *Beef* is well worth the attention of any reader who has a taste for something a little out-of-

the-ordinary in sensational fiction.

### Holidays for Others

ONCE more Mr. Punch makes his appeal for the Women's Holiday Fund, which exists to give a few days of relaxation, by the sea or in the country, to mothers and children from the poor districts of London. Some of these women have never had a holiday in their lives, and all deserve and benefit by one more than most of us. The work of the Fund is growing steadily, and so are its expenses. Please help by sending a donation, however small, to the Secretary, Women's Holiday Fund, 76, Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1.

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